

Message Text

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73

ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 NEAE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03

SS-15 ACDA-19 IO-15 CCO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00

INRE-00 USSS-00 AF-10 EUR-25 DRC-01 /139 W

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O 070015Z OCT 73

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 4614

INFO AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 11884

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, LE, SY, IS

SUBJ: LEBANESE DEMARCHE

PRIME MINISTER SOLH CALLED ME TO MEET HIM AT TWO AM SUNDAY OCT 7. HE EXPRESSED CONCERN ABOUT POSSIBLE ISRAELI AGGRESSION AGAINST LEBANON BASED ON ATTITUDE AT MEETING TODAY WITH ISRAELIS IN UN MIXED ARMISTICE COMMISSION. ISRAELIS PROTESTED FACT THAT SYRIAN PLANE HAD LANDED AT LEBANESE MILITARY AIRFIELD EARLIER TODAY AND HAD LATER TAKEN OFF AGAIN. ISRAELI REPS SAID IF THERE WERE REPETITION OF SUCH ACTIVITIES, LEBANON WOULD SUFFER GRAVE CONSEQUENCE.

SOLH EXPLAINED SYRIAN PLANE HAD MADE FORCED LANDING AT LEBANESE AIRFIELD NEAR SYRIAN BORDER IN DAMAGED PLANE AND SAID PILOT RESUMED FLIGHT AFTER BRIEF RECUPERATION.

I ASKED IF PILOT HAD BEEN GIVEN FUEL OR ASSISTANCE IN REPAIRING PLANE, WHICH IF TRUE, WOULD INVOLVE LEBANON IN SERIOUS WAY IN CURRENT HOSTILITIES. P.M. CALLED MILITARY AUTHORITIES IN MY PRESENCE AND WAS TOLD NO ASSISTANCE HAD BEEN PROVIDED SYRIAN PILOT. SOLH EMPHASIZED LEBANON'S STRONG DESIRE TO STAY
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OUT OF THE BATTLE AND SAID LEBANON WOULD FIGHT ONLY IF ATTACKED.

THIS CONNECTION HE SAID KEY PALESTINIAN LEADERS HAD BEEN CALLED IN TODAY AND TOLD GOL WOULD NOT TOLERATE THEIR CAUSING ANY TROUBLE. AT ALL COSTS GOL WISHES AVOID GIVING ISRAELIS PRETEXT FOR ATTACKING LEBANON.

GOL REQUESTED U.S. ASSISTANCE (AND THAT OF OTHER WESTERN FRIENDS) IN URGING RESTRAINT ON ISRAEL.

GOL OBVIOUSLY EMBARRASSED BY SYRIAN PILOT'S FORCED LANDING AND I AM SURE WILL DO EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO AVOID REPETITION OF SUCH INCIDENT.

I TRUST DEPT WILL AGREE TO RECOMMEND ISRAELIS NOT OVERREACT TO THIS ISOLATED EVENT AND AVOID EXTENSION OF FIGHTING TO LEBANESE FRONT.
BUFFUM

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